PROMENADE

a magazine of american folklore

VOL. VIII ISSUE 8

the American Square Dance Group

new york, n.y.

"The purpose of the American Square Dance Group is to make available those rich stores of native dance, music, and general Americana which comprise American folk culture; to conduct activities without regard to race, creed, color or social position; to cooperate with those who hold similar views."

Constitution of the A.S.D.G.

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Published ten times yearly
Subsciption $1.50 a year
Single mailed copy $ .25
550 Riverside Dr., 27, N. Y.
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ADVENTURES IN MUSIC

The most informative and scholarly folklore program on the Metropolitan air waves, right now, is the "Adventures in Music" series over WNYC.

This series includes many different types of music, but our favorite program is the Thursday afternoon weekly presentation of folk music.

The commentary, by Jac Holzman, is instructive without being pedantic, informal without being corny or quaint. The recordings played on this program, from the collection of Mr. Holzman, are genuine folk and selected with great care.

Mr. Holzman has been tracing the origin and background of our American folk music, and comparing this music with the folk music of other countries. Folk dance tunes as well as folk songs are presented on this program.

Our only complaint about this radio show is the hour at which it is presented. So many people are on their way uptown, downtown and all around the town, at five o'clock on any day, that many sincerely interested folks must, of necessity, miss this program. Our hope is that our Municipal Station soon will be able to program this series at a later hour, so that more people will be able to hear it.

MORE KENTUCKY TALK

In the last issue of Promenade we printed some colloquialisms which color the speech of my Kentucky kinfolk. Apparently "furren out-landers" are interested in these every day mountain sayings, for I've received requests for more.

"I'm all harped up to listen."
"I'll keep tight-shut about it."
"She's got a mouth that oughter be left in the woods to catch bears. She's a sight more talky than needs be."
"He cain't stare me in the eyeballs and thank me kindseom."
"She's a she-woman- short-minded in the head."
"The whole world is upsey down. Hit's the Bible-truth!"
"Don't uncomfort me, consarn ye."
"He's a back-fired fool."

BUT

"We'uns best be patientable and reasonish about hit."

Margot

FAIR ELLENDER

The ballad of Fair Ellender has been found in many sections of our country, from New England down through the South and West. A variant collected by Margot from the singing of an Illinois woman was published in Promenade, Volume V, number 1. The ballad dates back at least to 1663, and was sung in Scotland and England. The song is also known in Norse balladry.

This version of Child Ballad #73 was collected by Leon Pledger from the singing of his mother, Mrs. Myrtle Pledger, of Dallas, Texas. Mrs. Pledger learned this song in Hillsboro, Texas, around 1890. The melody is a particularly interesting one for experimentation in harmonization and improvisation.

Oh mother, Oh mother come riddle my sport,
Come riddle them one by two
And if I must marry Fair Ellender
Or bring the Brown girl home, Oh home,
Or bring the Brown girl home.

The Brown girl she has house and lands,
Fair Ellender she has none.
If I must marry Fair Ellender
Or bring the Brown girl home, oh home,
Or bring the Brown girl home.

Go saddle and bridle me the speediest horse
that ever hoed the ground
Go saddle and bridle the swiftest horse
that ever hoed the ground, oh ground,
That ever hoed the ground.

She dressed her waiting maids in black
and her self she dressed in green
And every town that she rode through
They taked her to be some queen, oh queen,
They taken her to be some queen.

She rode 'til she came to Lord Thomas' hall.
She rattled the bell and it rang
and none was ready but Lord Thomas
to rise and let her in, oh in.
Oh to rise and let her in.

He took her by her lily-white hand,
He led her through the hall,
And sat her down at the foot of the table
Midst' the quality all, oh all,
Oh all, amidst' the quality all.

(cont. on next page)

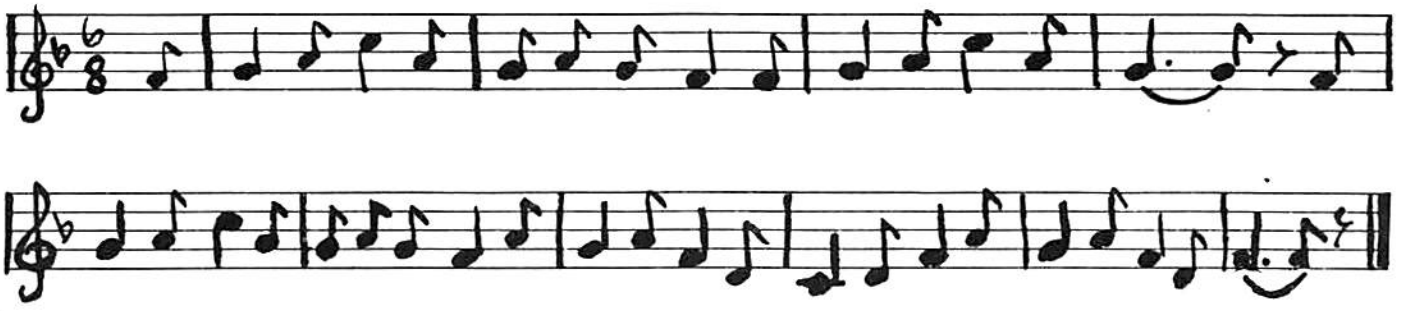
Lord Thomas- Lord Thomas, is this your wife?
Lord Thomas, Lord Thomas said she-
When you could have married as nice a girl
As ever the sun shined on, oh on,
As ever the sun shined on.

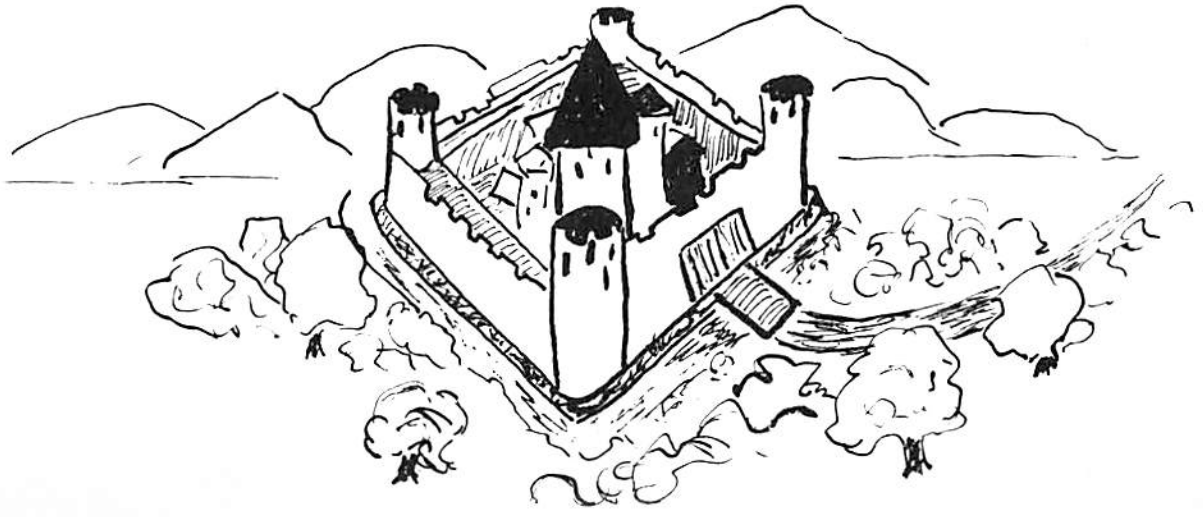
The Brown girl had a little pin knife
It being both small and keen.
She pierced it into Fair Ellender's side
Til she did enter the heart, oh heart,
Til she did enter the heart.

Lord Thomas, Lord Thomas, are you blind,
Or can't you see at all,
And don't you see my own heart's blood
Come trickling down my side, oh side,
Come trickling down my side.

He took the Brown girl by her hand,
And led her to the hall,
And took his sword and cut her head off,
And threw it against the wall, oh wall,
And threw it against the wall.

He pointed the handle of the sword to the floor
And thrust the point in his breast,
Saying, here is the loss of three true lovers.
God send them home to rest, oh rest,
God send them home to rest.





CLARA'S CONTRA

Bob Krebs, one of the callers of our group, also calls dances at Clara de Hirsch, a residence for girls. At a dance there, he had a request for a longways dance. He had his dancers form contra sets, picked out a record, placed it on the phonograph, and then forgot every contra dance he had ever known. Rather than disappoint the dancers, he improvised the following dance. Could this be the way in which many of our now "traditional" dances originated?

Formation: Longways - for as many as will. #1,3,5, etc., active.
Head couple is nearest to the music, foot couple is farthest.

Music: See tune on the last page of this issue, "Forest of Bondy".

CALLS:	MEASURES
A. Right hand star	4
Left hand back	4
B. Actives down center	4
C. Come back and form lines	4
D. Down the room in lines	4
And back	4
E. Actives turn once and three-quarters and cast off	8

DESCRIPTION:

A. Odd couples with evens: Gents join right hands, ladies join right hands above, walk eight steps around in clockwise direction; turn and join left hands, walk eight steps back to place.

B. Active couples join inside hands and walk eight steps down the center of the set.

C. Men turn to the left with left shoulders leading, ladies turn to the right, with right shoulders leading. Join inside hands and walk eight steps back to place, facing the head of the set. Active man joins left hands with inactive man, girls join right hands, so that a line of four is formed with the active couples facing the head of the set, and the inactives facing the foot.

D. Move down the room, eight steps in line, actives walking backwards, inactives walking forward. Retracing steps, walk eight steps back to place

E. Actives drop inactive hands, join right hands and turn once and three-quarters, then cast off into the place below.
To cast off, active ladies put right hands around inactive ladies waists, turn out and around, as a couple, to face the center. Active men join left hands with inactive men's right, turn out and around as a couple, a and face the center. The actives begin again from A, with the next inactive couples.

Actives reaching the foot of the set wait for one repetition, then begin to dance as inactives.
Inactives reaching the head of the set wait one repetition before beginning to dance.

Ellen Anderson: Folk Costumes in Denmark. Copenhagen, Einar Munksgaard, 1952. 30pp., 36 plates.

This is a book of folk-costumes such as Danes wore up to the last century. As the introduction tells us, these photographs are of festival costumes only, but it would have been valuable, as contrast, to have included one plate showing the peasant's everyday gray homespun. Life in the rural communities of Denmark meant hard work most of the time; "dress-up" clothes were kept for special occasions.

There is a good general introduction, in which are described some of the general customs in folk dress such as the white caps worn by unmarried girls being exchanged for black ones on their wedding day, and folk beliefs, that an apron worn to the back could ward off a witch's evil eye, or scare a werewolf. There is an individual description for each picture, many of which are in color, and all excellent. In one of these photographs is a tapestry which raises an interesting question of which is borrowed from whom: the pattern of this tapestry, in a setting dated 1830-40, is identical with that in an American colonial spread owned by Margot. There are other "borrowings": the idea of leaving pleated skirts plain in front, to be covered by an apron, was used also by Hungarian women: the over-culottes worn by Danish seamen were borrowed by the French revolutionists.

"Folk Costumes in Denmark" could have included a map to show where each of the districts which it mentions lies, but in all other ways is a good introduction to Danish folkways, raising, as it does, interesting questions of similarities and influences traceable in other folkways.

NEWS BRIEFS
-Joe Thomas-Hazell

The most interesting news comes from the Far East, where, according to reports, square-dancing has become very popular in Singapore. On the other hand, a report from Tokyo says there is a decline in the number of people who are square-dancing in Japan. The dances are becoming so complicated that beginners and average dancers are rapidly losing interest. We hope that some leaders will divide their groups into several sections, depending on the ability of individuals.

Our "youngsters" for the month are Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Wilson, ages 80 and 76, of Calgary, Canada. The Mountview Community Club Square-Dancing Assn. has given them a permanent pass to the dances. The Wilsons have an excellent attendance record at the club.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat has announced the 10th Annual Folk Dance Festival, which will be held on April 8,9,10th, and 11th, in St.Louis, Mo., at the Opera House. This year is the 150th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase, and this will be the theme of this Folk Festival. Groups are invited from all parts of the country to participate in the Festival.

For further information, write to
Sarah Gertrude Knott
National Folk Festival
St. Louis Globe-Democrat
1133 Franklin Ave.
St. Louis, Mo.

Some copies of the previous issue of PROMENADE are still available. You may begin your subscription with Volume 8, No. 7, or with the current issue.

ISRAEL FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

The second Israel Folk Dance Festival was held in the Hunter College Auditorium on Jan. 4th. The air of uncertainty accompanying last year's "first" was replaced by a newpoise and more polished technique, and again the spirit and enthusiasm of the dancers excited and overwhelmed a sold-out house.

First prize was given to Hashomer Hatzair, who danced "The Vinegroves" and "Gather About Me". The judges this year at the festival were Michael Herman, director, Folk Dance House; Dvora Lapson, director, Folk Dance Department, Jewish Education Committee; and Bessie Schoenberg, director, Dance Department, Sarah Lawrence College.

The American Square Dance Group performed four dances representing American Regions: Twin Sisters, a New England Longways, called by Bob Krebs; a 19th century ballroom dance Martin's Quadrille, and a Running-Set, circle dance done in the South, which were calld by George Roth;Bob Sloane called the Denver WagonWheel, a Western square dance. Hannah Gordon was at the piano playing with her usual fervor.

An honorary chairman this year was Eleanor Roosevelt; the former first lady received a tremendous ovation. We were proud to dance before so great a person, who also has a common interest in American square dancing.

Ellie Roth

AMERICAN SQUARES

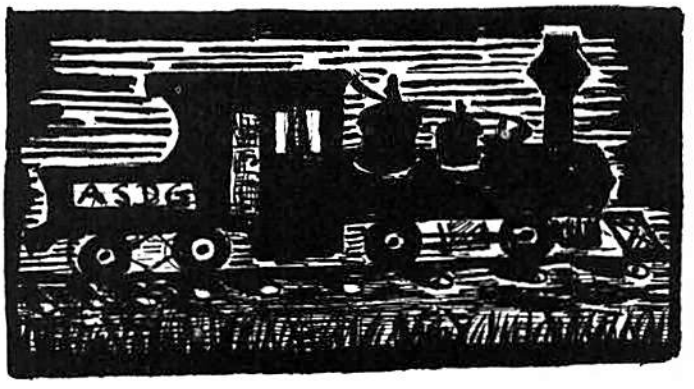
A very good catalogue of available new and older dance recordings is included in the January issue of American Squares. The records, as well as many dance books, may be ordered through Books and Records, 1159 Broad St., Newark 5, N. J.

ASDG CHRISTMAS REUNION

Christmas always means a reunion with at least some of the inactive members of the ASDG who return to New York for the festive season. Among the old-timers who joined us last month were Janet Gerard, Gene Washspress and his wife, Natalie, Edie Kramer and her husband, Dick Cohen, Bob Trotta, Renee Rosenbaum and Sy Herzog.

Our official pianist, Hannah Gordon, and Benny Gordon, her husband, and George Krassner, our official fiddler, also helped us celebrate. News reaches us that Hank LeClerq's out of the U.S.Air Force and is back in town.

We welcome Joe Thomas-Hazell as a new Member of the ASDG. He has already volunteered for work on Promenade. This we like!



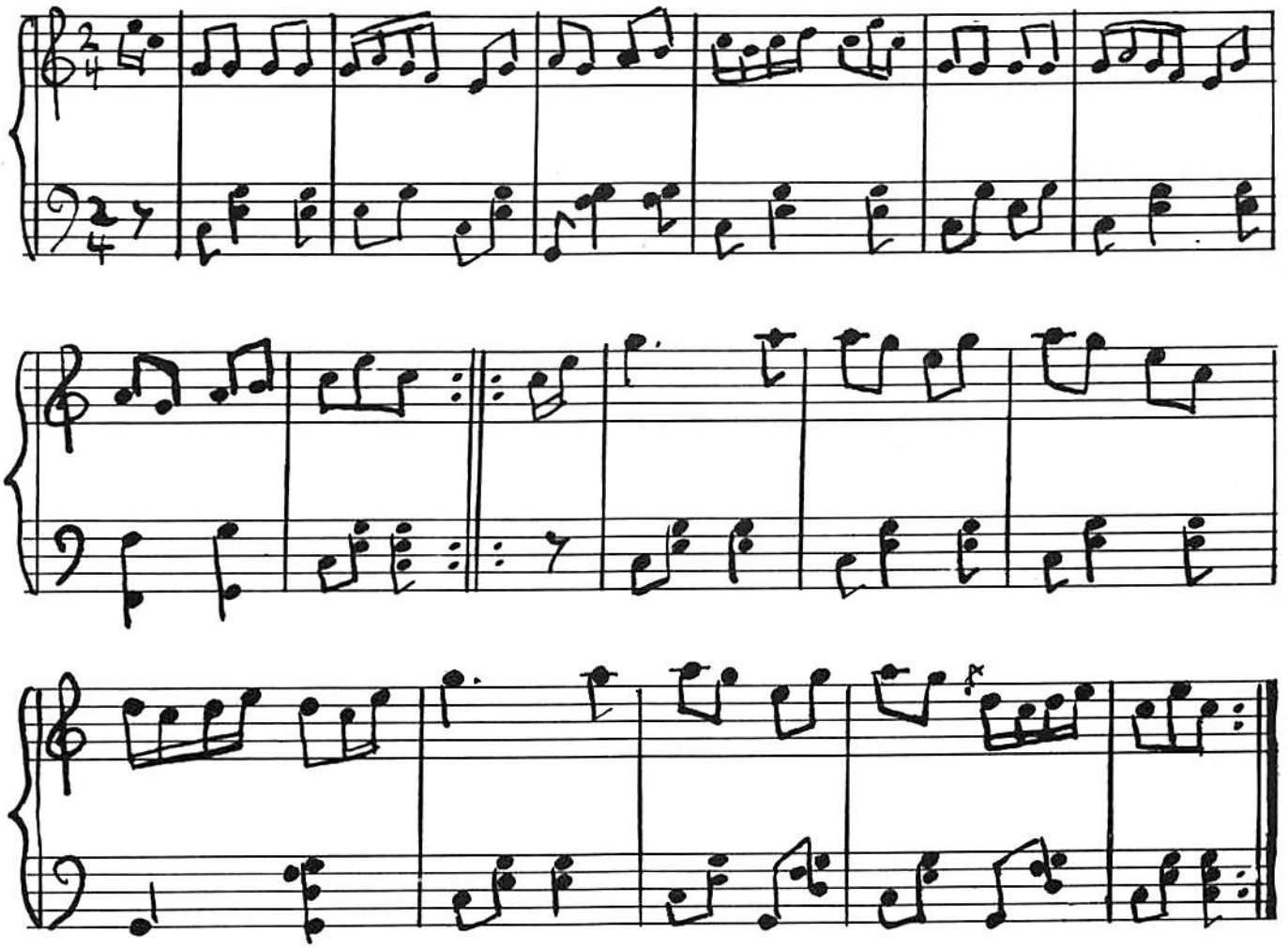
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

6,7.	St. Petersburg)	Barbershop
18.	Sarasota)	Quartette
20.	Fort Lauderdale)	
7.	Moore Haven, Fla. Indian Festival Seminole Indian Chalo-Nitka party	
12-17	New Orleans, La. Mardi-Gras	
15-17	Biloxi, Miss. Mardi-Gras	

FOREST of BONDY

This tune was found in an old book, The Parlor Companion; or Boston Musical Library, published in 1850. We are sure the title has some historical significance, but what it means is still unknown to us. If any of our readers can help us out in our search for background matrial for this tune-title we'd be very grateful. The accompaniment is purposefully skeletal, for we expect you to make up your own arrangements for the tunes we supply.



FOLK DANCE GUIDE

Paul Schwartz is the editor and publisher of a very interesting Folk Dance Guide, now in its third edition.

This booklet lists folk dancing groups in Alaska, California, Texas, Hawaii, New York, and Wisconsin. The listing of addresses, fees, and the meeting times of these groups makes the Guide invaluable to the dancing nomad. This catalogue is not complete, nor does the editor pretend that it is. He hopes, however, for a wider geographical coverage in the future.

Articles and a selected Bibliography of books and current periodicals are included in the Folk Dance Guide. The booklet costs only 50 cents. For information write Paul Schwartz, Box 342, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y.